



Supporting Greater Dignity and Protection: Enhancing Self-Reliance in Food Security and Nutrition in Protracted Refugee Situations

A High-Level Side Event of the Summit on Addressing Large Movements of Refugees & Migrants

**19 September 2016, 1:15 p.m. — 2:45 p.m.
Conference Room 7, United Nations Headquarters**

Sponsored by Denmark, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the Republic of Uganda, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the World Food Programme (WFP)

Concept Note

Background

According to UNHCR's *Global Trends* report, nearly 6.7 million refugees living in 27 countries were considered to be in a protracted situation at the end of 2015. The average duration of protracted refugee situations is an alarming 26 years.¹ This situation has led to a growing critique of the traditional humanitarian assistance model and calls for a new global approach to refugee assistance that is capable of progressively increasing the dignity and self-reliance of refugees while enhancing their relationships with host populations.

Several governments have been leaders in exploring progressive approaches. In the face of massive displacement from the Syria crisis, the Government of Jordan has introduced innovative solutions such as cash-based transfers that have allowed the country to benefit economically from the refugees' presence. The Government of Uganda's policies of providing refugees with land, freedom of movement, and the right to work has made its approach a global model for self-reliance efforts. The Government of Denmark has been a strong advocate for these progressive approaches and has sought to find ways to ensure they are adequately resourced. Numerous academic studies have supported this shift in thinking, by demonstrating the potential economic boost that refugees can bring to countries of asylum.²

Building on these insights, UNHCR and WFP have evaluated the impact of their combined agency efforts in protracted refugee situations and have recently finalized a new *Joint Strategy on Enhancing Self-Reliance in Food*

¹ UNHCR Global Trends 2015, <http://www.unhcr.org/statistics/country/576408cd7/unhcr-global-trends-2015.html>

² "Refugees deserve action and investment, not indifference and cruelty", article by Filippo Grandi, High Commissioner for Refugees, and published by the World Economic Forum, 24 May 2016, <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2016/05/refugees-deserve-action-and-investment-not-indifference-and-cruelty>

Security and Nutrition in Protracted Refugee Situations. Applicable to all situations in which UNHCR and WFP are jointly assisting refugees in protracted contexts, the strategy has two complementary components: strengthening the livelihoods of refugees while ensuring that basic food and nutrition needs are met, and working with governments, host communities, and humanitarian and development partners to create an enabling environment that will allow refugees to use their livelihood assets for greater self-reliance.

Purpose

The side-event will serve to highlight the opportunities for transitioning from traditional model of humanitarian assistance to one that emphasizes refugee self-reliance in food security and nutrition in protracted situations. It will also explore national and international efforts to overcome the very real barriers to realising the potential economic contribution of refugees and responding to the needs of host communities.

Key themes

- Enhancing self-reliance of refugees through joint livelihood and employment creation programmes, securing long-term financing for these efforts, and identifying realistic expectations for progress in this area.
- Creating an enabling environment for self-reliance in food security and nutrition and other longer-term outcomes for refugees through policies that secure the right to work, access to adequate, productive land, finance and markets, and integration of refugees into national development plans.
- Exploring the economic potential of refugees, the need to support host populations, and the importance of promoting social cohesion between the groups.
- Innovating and working through new types of partnership and approaches between donors, host governments, the private sector, and civil society organisations.

Format

The event will take the form of a panel discussion chaired by an internationally renowned journalist, Ms Veronica Pedrosa from Al Jazeera English. The moderator will introduce the topic and will ask one question directed to each speaker. Subsequently, she will invite the audience to ask questions and then request concluding thoughts from each of the panellists.

Remarks by:

- H.E. Kristian Jensen, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Denmark
- H.E. Nasser Judeh, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan
- Hon. Hilary Onek, Minister of Relief, Disaster Preparedness and Refugees of the Republic of Uganda
- Ms. Ertharin Cousin, World Food Programme Executive Director
- Mr. Filippo Grandi, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and Ms. Kelly Clements, United Nations Deputy High Commissioner for Refugees
- Professor Alexander Betts, Director of the Refugee Studies Centre at the University of Oxford

Mr. Ban Ki Moon, the UN Secretary-General, will provide the closing remarks.